

Applicant(s):Dov Z. Glucksman and Gary P. McGonagle and Laura
J. Nickerson
Serial No.: 10/800,139
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In the Specification

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 16 as follows:

A marketed Bodum Assam brewing apparatus includes a cylindrical insert that is located in a container and has a solid wall portion at the bottom and a perforated intermediate wall portion. As the plunger passes through the insert, it forces the infusible material toward the bottom and eventually captures it in a closed volume at the bottom of the insert. This approach, however, relies upon the effectiveness of a peripheral seal that contacts the interior portion of the cylindrical insert. When the insert passes the solid wall portion, a significant hydraulic pressure can be produced below the insert and force the seal to open. Opening the seal allows at least some of the infusible material, such as tea leaves, to escape back into the beverage.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 12, line 14 with the following:

An internally threaded ferrule 77 permanently attaches to a post 80 on the lower rigid disk 67. The post 80 extends through a central aperture 81 in the flexible disk 68 and into

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the post 70 on the upper rigid disk 66. The end shank 63 threads into the ferrule 77. Thus when the piston 61 is properly assembled, the rigid disks 66 and 67 clamp a central portion 82 of the intermediate disk 68. However, a peripheral sealing portion or seal 83 extends beyond the peripheries of the rigid disks 66 and 67 to form a sliding seal with the infusing chamber 40 of FIGS. 5 and 6[and as represented by portions of the body 41 shown in phantom in FIG. 9].

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 14, line 18 as follows:

When the piston 61 reaches the solid wall portion 42 as shown in FIG. 12, further motion within the confines of the infusing chamber 40 increases the pressure on the peripheral seal 83. However, the pressure exerted by the liquid below the piston 61 will be greater than the pressure exerted by the liquid above the piston 61. Specifically, the mechanical force exerted by the piston 61 as it moves into the portion of the body 41 defined by the solid lower wall portion 42 increases the pressure of the liquid below the piston 61. With a continued downward force applied to the [actuator]operator 62, the flap valves 72 will displace upward into the larger apertures 71 and open the passages through the apertures 73.

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Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 15, line 5 with the following:

More specifically and referring to FIGS. 12 and 13, each flap valve 72 shown in the figures is formed by stamping or otherwise forming a horse shoe shaped slit through the intermediate flexible disk 82 forming a hinge portion 90. As the pressure increases, the force from the liquid below the apertures 73 lifts the flap valves 72 about their respective hinge portions 90. Liquid then passes through the apertures 73 in the lower rigid disk 67, the flap valves 72 and the apertures 71 as represented by arrow 91. The bottom disk 67 blocks any tea leaves ~~[[86]]~~85 from passing through piston 61 and escaping into the beverage due to the small size of the apertures 73. The open flap valves 72 minimize the pressure differential across the piston 61 to a value that is well below the threshold at which the peripheral seal 83 might leak preventing any tea leaves from escaping back into the beverage past the peripheral seal 83.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 17, line 3 with the following:

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Next the individual can pick up the plunger assembly 60 and preferably move the lid 31 to be proximate the piston 61 or even positioned to nest the piston 61 within the skirt 35. In an alterative embodiment shown in FIG. 14 the [cover 34]lid 31 may carry an O-ring 94 at the aperture 39 to provide friction to keep the lid 31 proximate the piston 61. In another embodiment shown in FIG. 15 the skirt 35 can be sized to engage the perimeter of the flexible disk 68 to maintain that position.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 19, line 4 with the following:

As other modifications, the piston 61 and operator 62 each can have a variety of shapes. The number of apertures and flap valves 72 and other aspects of their implementations can vary for other applications. For example, the plunger assembly 60 with its one-way valves may be adapted for use in other infusion beverage brewing systems such as french press coffee and tea makers that have a single cylindrical solid container.

In systems for brewing coffee, the coffee grounds are small, so the filtering or straining apertures, like the apertures 73 in FIG. 13, may be ineffective. If the aperture size is

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reduced, however, a single aperture may restrict the flow and subject the peripheral seal 82 to failure. FIG. 16 depicts an alternative wherein the aperture 71 in the upper plate 67 and flap valve 72 remain in the same shape. However, the flap valve 72 overlies a plurality of apertures 95. Each aperture 95 has a smaller diameter to filter or strain the coffee grounds. However, the number of apertures under a flap valve 72 can be selected to provide a total cross sectional area that is equivalent to the area of the single aperture 73.

In this way, the pressure required to move the piston 61 through the liquid will be limited so that the pressure should not rise to a level that would break the peripheral seal.